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EU
SUBJECT: GERMANY'S VIEWS OF THE JULY 27-28 GAERC MEETING

Classified By: JGIAUQUE EMAIL DATED JULY 16 2009
BERLIN 00869

1. (C) SUMMARY. Germany expects significant discussion of Iran before and during next week's EU General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC), in addition to discussions of Somalia and Georgia. However, the EU plans to wait until September to begin a regular review of which Iranian individuals and entities associated with proliferation are subject to sanctions. On Somalia, the MFA confirmed that Germany shares U.S. concerns about the flow of support to the extremist organization al-Shabaab and wants to work with the U.S. on ways to stem the flow of support and fighters into the region. MFA's views largely track with our points on Afghanistan, but the MFA continues to express strong reservations regarding a potential U.S. role in the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia (ref b). Post delivered ref A points on the July 27-28 EU GAERC to MFA Head EU Correspondent Michael Fluegger on July 17, and followed-up with him on July 21. We also delivered the Georgia points earlier to MFA Deputy Division Head for the South Caucasus and Central Asia Maria Gosse (see Ref B). END SUMMARY.

2. (C) Post delivered ref A points on the July 27-28 EU GAERC to MFA Head EU Correspondent Michael Fluegger on July 17 and followed-up with him on July 21. We also delivered the Georgia points earlier to MFA Deputy Division Head for the South Caucasus and Central Asia Maria Grosse (see Ref B). We spoke separately with MFA Near East Division Director Boris Ruge to reinforce our concerns on Syria, and with MFA Iran Unit Chief Andreas Krueger to discuss Iran.

IRAN

3. (C) Krueger told Iran Watcher that the EU will likely begin discussion on the Iran in the July 22 PSC meeting in the run-up to the July GAERC. While Sweden, in its role as EU President, wants to hold a debate on how the EU should position itself towards Iran, other Member States consider it to be too early. Germany would like to see the PSC and the GAERC serve as a forum to reflect on the events in Iran, as well as to set the stage and prepare Member States for what will likely be a difficult period of relations with Iran. It is important to make clear to other EU countries that they need to prepare for a time when effort beyond agreeing upon additional sanctions will be needed. He noted that while the debate will certainly take place at the UN level, some Member States need to realize that the sanctions issue will also need to be debated within the EU. He added that EU Member States continue to informally slow-roll official visa (but not tourist) applications by Iranian government officials. On human rights, he noted that the EU Presidency is drafting a statement on the situation of the French researcher currently imprisoned in Iran.

14. (C) In general, Fluegger thought there were three possible actions that the GAERC could take: a statement by EU president Sweden, a decision to have the EU troika demarche Tehran and/or continuing the delay in acting on visa applications from Iranian officials. He noted that the informal EU agreement to slow-roll Iranian visa applications had been taken at informal meeting of EU political directors in early July. He noted, however, that while the Schengen countries can have a common visa policy vis a vis Iran, that does not necessarily apply to EU members who are not members of the Schengen area. It turns out, for example, that Bulgaria has no visa requirement at all for Iranians. Fluegger also noted that beginning in September, a regular EU review of the list of Iranian individuals and entities associated with proliferation who are currently subject to EU sanctions will begin. The idea is to update the list and to designate additional individuals and entities as required.

SOMALIA

15. (C) MFA Somalia Desk Officer Karsten Geier told poloff on July 21 that our points on Somalia basically track with MFA views, and expected the GAERC conclusions to touch upon the same points. More specifically, Fluegger confirmed that Germany shares U.S. concerns about the flow of support to the extremist organization al-Shabaab and wants to work with the U.S. on ways to stem the flow of support and fighters into the region. He noted that the French are just about to launch training program for Somalia security forces in

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Djibouti and have asked the Germans for support. Fluegger said that Defense Minister Jung has already indicated his willingness to support the program in principle, but it still not clear what role Germany will play. Moreover, Geier agreed on the need to support the TFG as well as the AMISOM.

GEORGIA

16. (C) Supporting what we heard from Gosse last week (ref b), Fluegger emphasized that Germany was not ruling out a U.S. role in the EUMM at some point, but simply had doubts that the timing was right for now. He was afraid that U.S. participation in the mission could make the EUMM more of a target by extremists who were trying to provoke a confrontation between the U.S. and Russia. He recommended that we take it slow and avoid any fast decisions one way or the other on this question. He noted that the U.S. was already present in Georgia doing valuable work on rule of law and other issues on a bilateral basis and should continue to do so.

17. (C) Since last week, the MFA has concluded that the idea of U.S. participation originally came from Georgia and possibly Sweden, according to Fluegger and MFA Head of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus Division Ernst Reichel. Fluegger said that Germany took a more differentiated view of the proposal than other countries (he mentioned the Baltics), which had immediately endorsed it unreservedly. He noted that the EUMM had been originally agreed to by Sarkozy and Medvedev as a neutral body consisting of personnel from European countries who would keep the Georgians from launching an attack against Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and vice versa. He said that while Germany supported in principle allowing third countries (i.e., non-EU members) to join the EUMM (he mentioned Turkey, Norway, Switzerland, etc.), he thought that adding the U.S. to the mix at the current time could upset the balance and lead the Russians to charge that the EU was not keeping its promise of neutrality.

18. (C) Fluegger said that one area where greater U.S. involvement would be useful was in the Geneva talks. He

noted that EU Special Rep Pierre Morel thought it would be extremely helpful for making progress if a senior U.S. official, such as EUR Assistant Secretary Phil Gordon, took part.
Bradtke